



NEWS RELEASE

MAYOR COLEEN J. SENG



LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
3140 N Street, Lincoln NE 68510 • Phone: 441-8000
Fax: 441-8323 or 441-6229

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FOR MORE INFORMATION: **Brian Baker, 441-8046**

LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY SAFE KIDS COALITION REMINDS TRICK-OR-TREATERS TO BE SAFE ON THE STREETS THIS HALLOWEEN

The SAFE KIDS Coalition reminds parents and caregivers that Halloween can result in safety hazards for children. All parents should take precautions to ensure the safety of their children while trick-or-treating. The following information will make Halloween safe and fun.

Halloween trick-or-treaters are encouraged to get an early start and to be safe. Kids are four times more likely to be hit by a car on Halloween than any other night of the year.

Whether children are trick-or-treating or walking to school, it's important for families to review safety tips together, said Brian Baker, Public Health Educator and Co-Chair of the local SAFE KIDS Coalition. Many of the risks child pedestrians face can be avoided if parents discuss important safety precautions with their kids before they leave the house.

The Lincoln-Lancaster County SAFE KIDS Coalition offers these guidelines to help parents and caregivers keep children safe this Halloween and throughout the school year.

Running out into the street is one of the most common causes of pedestrian-related deaths among children. As children race from house to house collecting treats, it is important for them to take the following precautions:

Visibility:

- " Decorate costumes, bags and sacks with retroreflective tape and stickers.
- " Use costumes that are light or bright enough to make children more visible at night.
- " Consider using glow sticks to make yourself more visible.

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Traffic:

- " Teach children to walk, not run, while trick-or-treating.
- " RemindRemind children toRemind children to stop at all street corners before crossing.Remind children to stop at intersections and crosswalks.
- " TeachTeach them to look left, right and left again before crossing theTeach them to look left, right and left again both ways as they cross.

Motorists:

- " Slow down in residential neighborhoods.
- " Look for pedestrians at intersections before making turns.
- " Obey all traffic signs and signals.

For younger kids:

- " Adults should accompany children under age 12 on their trick-or-treat rounds.
- " AttachAttach the name, address and phone number (including area code) of children under ageAttach the name to their clothes, in case they get separated from adults.
- " ParentsParents should bring treats homeParents should bring treats home and check them to ensure that items are with and are safely sealed.

For older kids:

- " MakeMake sureMake sure your children have change for a phoneMake sure your children have change for a phone home.
- " Instruct children to travel only in familiar areas and along a pre-established route.
- " InstructInstruct children never to enter a home or an apartment building unlessInstruct children never to enter a home without an adult.

At home:

- " RemoveRemove breakableRemove breakable items or obstacles such as tools, ladders andRemove breakable items from steps, lawn and porch.
- " Keep walkways, steps and landings well-lit.

Halloween Halloween can indeed be scary, with not only a rise in falls and burns among children. As decorations, the following precautions can help keep trick-or-treaters free of fall- and burn-related injuries.

- " Apply face paint or cosmetics directly to the face. They that can obstruct a child's vision.
- " Dress children in shoes that fit. Adult shoes are not safe for trick-or-treaters. make it easier to trip and fall.
- " Teach children not to cut across yards. It is safer to walk on sidewalks and streets. Teach children to stay off clotheslines in the dark.
- " Look for "flame resistant" labels on costumes, masks, beards and wigs.
- " Use fire-resistant material when making costumes.
- " Avoid costumes made of flimsy material and outfits with big, baggy sleeves and skirts.

For more information on Halloween and other child safety issues, contact the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 441-8046.

The Lincoln-Lancaster County SAFE KIDS Coalition is the first and only national nonprofit organization dedicated solely to the prevention of childhood injury -- the number one killer of children ages 14 and under. Local SAFE KIDS coalitions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are part of the national campaign.

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